

REMARKS

Claims 55-58 have been canceled, and therefore the rejections directed to the same are moot. Claims 45-54 are currently pending in the application. Each of the independent claims has been amended to more clearly define the claimed invention.

Claims 45-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Foreign Patent EP 0 893 850 A2 (hereinafter "FP '850").

Independent claims 45, 48, 52 and 54 have been amended to recite "wherein the flexible contact element is not attached to the contact section when the female electrical terminal is mated with a complementary male terminal." FP '850 fails to teach or suggest this feature, and therefore, does not anticipate the claims.

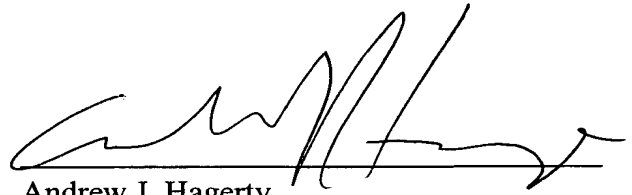
Focusing on pages 6 and 7 of the office action, the examiner notes that FP '850 discloses that the spring member 30 can be detachably mounted on the terminal body, and states that "when the spring member 30 is in the detached state it is not attached, [which] makes the recitation 'the flexible contact element is not attached to the contact section' [recited in each of claims 55-58] unpatentable." Applicant notes that the spring member 30 of FP '850 is detachably mounted "so that it can be easily removed from the terminal body" (col. 5, lines 37-38). Thus, it is clear that *during use*, spring member 30 *is attached* to the terminal body. Applicant accordingly has amended each of the independent claims to clarify that the flexible member is not attached to the contact section *when the female electrical terminal is mated with a complementary male terminal*; that is, during use.

Since FP '850 fails to teach or suggest all of the features in independent claims 45, 48, 52 and 54, the claims are patentably distinct from the reference. The remaining claims depend from one of these independent claims, and are therefore, perforce, also patentably distinct from FP '850. Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and requests confirmation of the same through the issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

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PATENT

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew J. Hagerty', written over a horizontal line.

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